



Race, Accountability and the Achievement Gap (A)

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Historical Background

Demographics


- Northwest side of Washington DC
- Home to 1 million people of varied ethnicities by 2005
- Populace continued to rise steadily over 30 year period
- Mostly white suburban population shifted from 95% to 65% between 1970- 2005
- Neighborhoods became more racially integrated – influx of African American, Asian and Hispanic families
- By the end of 2005-2006 school year African Americans and Hispanics comprised 43%. 25% were eligible for free and reduced lunch



Historical Background

Race Relations

- Acknowledged as being comprised of affluent, progressive minded people however wrestled with issues of race
- Early years prior to desegregation, Montgomery County was made up of two separate school systems (one for whites, the other for African American)
- African American schools received less funding from the county than the white schools
- African American schools were made up of inferior facilities, reading materials, and teacher compensation

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- The header features a blue background with stylized white and light blue clouds. A large, bright yellow sun with a blue center is positioned in the upper middle.
- One month following U.S. Supreme Court **Brown vs. Board of Education**, the **Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS)** created and integration implementation plan
 - In 1961 a slight majority of **MCPS** schools were desegregated by using student busing and transfer requests
 - Montgomery chapter of **NAACP** noted that **MCPS** board and administration were moving slowly to perpetuate inequities between blacks and whites
 - The minority population doubled in 1980
 - Newly elected board members campaigned to eliminate forced busing and social engineering



Attempts to fix Integration

- MCPS integrate schools in other ways
 - Created race based admissions, magnet programs in schools with large minority populations
- The number of minority students increased however issues with achievement gap and race continued to emerge
- Magnet schools
- Board member Blair Ewing stated that there was progress over five years. However, there were no clearly identifiable set of strategies being systemically pursued through out the school system
- Parents filed a federal lawsuit against MCPS



Creating Success for Every Student

- Although there were struggles with minority student performance, the district was still considered “one of the nations premiere school systems”
- In 1990 the board commissioned Yale university professor Edmund Gordon to research the minority student achievement gap
 - The report was called , “ A Study of Minority Student Achievement in MCPS.”
- There were concerns within the community regarding the fact that minority groups were scoring approximately one standard deviation lower than ethnic majority students
- This raised questions regarding the districts plan for addressing minority achievement.
- Study showed that there were low expectations for minority students.

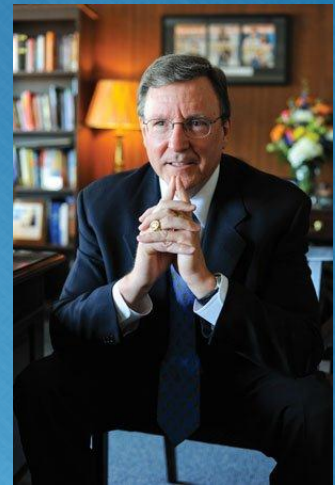


Paul Vance

- Newly appointed African American Superintendent Paul Vance used findings from the study to create to Success for Every Student (SFES).
- Vance's administration implemented the plans reform initiatives from spring SY92 to the end of SY99

Raising the Bar, Close the Gap - Jerry Weast

- Ten years after Gordon's report the new MCPS board appointed Weast.
- Began reforms at the elementary level
- Directed high schools to focus on student outcomes on select targets such as the SAT and AP exam
- Administrators revamped specific components in all schools by changing curriculum and hiring staff (first wave of reform)
- Added initiatives such as all day kindergarten, reduced class size, and targeted professional development
- Identified schools as focused schools.





Under Weast's Leadership MCPS

- There was a push for data driven decision making
 - Use of data rose from 10% to 98%
- Created IMS **Instructional Management System** to input and create a detailed account of students academic history. By 2005 all elementary and middle schools had access to IMS. IMS would roll out to High Schools In SY2005
- After six years as superintendent Weast received support from most board members. The county council leadership increased the budget by \$100 millions



MCPS Leadership and Organizational Structure

- Community superintendent Weast made a major organizational change-
 - Hired six community superintendents to oversee principals.
 - Each community superintendent managed a geographical cluster.

In addition:

- Created a staff development teacher in every school to support reforms
- District assigned instructional specialists to support staff development

Targeting the Achievement Gap

The data:

- The most progress were in elementary schools
- SY05 showed that 81% of kindergarteners could read a level three text with 90% or higher accuracy. This was up from 56% in SY02.



Frieda Lacey (Deputy Superintendent)

- While looking over 2004 participation rates she notices the participation of some minority groups dipped
- Aimed for 100% PSAT participation in 10th grade to maximize scores on SAT and identify high performing students not enrolled in advanced courses.
- What other district effort were compromised if schools were not meeting participation targets?
- The mixed race leadership allowed the team to tackle highly sensitive issues that made others feel uncomfortable.



Re-examining District Policies and Procedures

- **Grading and reporting**
- **2000 implemented its first standardized grading scale.**
- **AP/Honors Course Enrollment**
- **Concerns about the rigor and quality of the programs**
- **G & T Identification**
- **Building Capacity**
- **Creation of a Diversity Training and Development department and a Professional Learning Communities Institute**



School Based Initiatives to Close the Gap

- MCPS board worked to implement district wide policies
- Broadening access to Advanced classes
- Discussing Race Openly With Students
- To motivate students to work hard teachers were transparent
- Special Programs Targeting Minority Students

Managing Expectations

- Expectations of minority students was an issue that was brought up regularly
- Concerns about low academic expectations for African American and Hispanic students

PELP Framework- How Does it Relate?

